

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 00527 230728Z

12
ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AF-06 ARA-06 /106 W
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R 230639Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4889
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0527

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILO, PLO, PFOR, AORG, ELAB, IS
SUBJ: ILO - REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PLO
OBSERVER STATUS

REF: A) STATE 12808 B) GENEVA 342 C) LONDON 1000

1. SUMMARY: GOA OFFICIALS SYMPATHETIC TO REASONS GIVEN FOR PROPOSED
POSTPONEMENT OF VOTE ON PLO OBSERVER STATUS AT ILO MEETING
(REFTELS). HOWEVER, AUSTRALIANS BELIEVE POSTPONEMENT UNLIKELY
TO AFFECT OUTCOME IN MEANINGFUL SENSE. AUSTRALIAN LABOR AND
EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES MOST INVOLVED IN ILO ALSO SYMPATHETIC
WITH EFFORTS TO PREVENT PLO FROM GAINING OBSERVER STATUS IN ILO,
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PAGE 02 CANBER 00527 230728Z

BUT EVIDENTLY BELIEVE GOA VIEW THAT THIS IS INEVITABLE IS

ESSENTIALLY CORRECT. IF IT WERE SOMEHOW TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT U.S. LABOR WILL WITHDRAW FROM ILO, THAT U.S. CONGRESS WILL HALT APPROPRIATIONS FOR ILO, AND THAT VIABILITY OF ORGANIZATION WILL BE PLACED IN DOUBT, AUSTRALIANS AND PERHAPS OTHERS MAY RE-THINK POSITION. THOUGH AUSTRALIAN POSITION NOT YET DEFINITELY MADE, WE BELIEVE GOA WILL GO ALONG WITH OBSERVER STATUS FOR PLO AND MAY VOTE FOR IT IF OVERALL VOTE LIKELY BE OVERWHELMINGLY IN FAVOR. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY REVIEWED ON JAN 23 POSSIBILITY OF POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PLO OBSERVER STATUS WITH DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (PIPER, FIRST ASST SECRETARY, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION), DRAWING ON MATERIAL IN REF A. PIPER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF PROBLEM AND MADE MUCH SAME POINTS AS BLANCHARD IN GENEVA AND BARBARA GREEN IN LONDON (REFS B AND C). PIPER SAID GOA AWARE IN GENERAL TERMS OF GROWING NEGATIVE FEELING OF AFL/CIO TOWARDS ILO AND APPRECIATED IMPORTANCE OF ENSURING THAT ILO REMAINS VIABLE ORGANIZATION. HE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT POSTPONEMENT OF VOTE ON PLO OBSERVER STATUS FROM FEBRUARY TO MAY WOULD REALLY CHANGE NATURE OF PROBLEM, RECALLING THAT ISSUE WAS PREVIOUSLY POSTPONED FROM NOV, 1974, TO FEB, 1975. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THESE WERE PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ONLY AND THAT HE WOULD URGENTLY SEEK READING FROM AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION TO ILO IN GENEVA AS TO WHETHER POSTPONEMENT LIKELY TO HAVE ANY USEFUL EFFECT.

3. PIPER WENT ON TO NOTE THAT OBSERVER STATUS FOR PLO IN ILO IS LOGICAL CONSEQUENCE OF VOTES ALREADY TAKEN IN OTHER UN OR UN-AFFILIATED BODIES, RECALLING OVERWHELMING VOTE IN UNGA LAST FALL.

4. EMBASSY LABOR OFFICER ALSO REVIEWED ISSUE IN MELBOURNE WITH AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF LABOR; PRESIDENT OF ACTU, BOB HAWKE; AND EMPLOYERS' REPRESENTATIVE, GEORGE POLITES. BARRY WATCHORN, ASST SECRETARY OF DEPT OF LABOR, TOLD LABOR OFFICER JAN 22 THAT DEPT OF LABOR SAW NO SUBSTANTIVE REASON FOR SEEKING DELAY ON VOTE. HE REFLECTED THAT ADMISSION OF PLO IN OBSERVER STATUS WAS EVIDENTLY NOT CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION BUT WAS WITHIN POWERS OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE AND WITHIN COMPETENCE OF GOVERNING BODY. HAWKE, WHO IS OUTSPOKEN SUPPORTER OF ISRAEL, WAS VITUPERATIVE ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 CANBER 00527 230728Z

PROPOSAL IN DISCUSSION WITH LABOR OFFICER BUT SAW LITTLE PROSPECT THAT HE COULD AFFECT AUSTRALIAN DECISION. GEORGE POLITES HAS DISCUSSED MATTER WITH HAWKE AND HOLDS MUCH SAME VIEW, BUT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CLEARLY DOUBTS THAT ANY USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY SECOND POSTPONEMENT OF VOTE.

5. COMMENT: LABOR OFFICER COMMENTS THAT DEPT OF LABOR POSITION SEEMS TO BE, "IF YOU CAN'T LICK THEM, DON'T STAND IN THEIR WAY."

THIS APPEARS ALSO TO BE POSITION OF DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
WHICH HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY UNWILLING TO SUPPORT POSITION WHICH,
IN ITS ASSESSMENT, IS LIKELY TO FAIL, WHATEVER MERITS OF QUESTION.
IF IT WERE SOMEHOW TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT U.S. LABOR WILL WITHDRAW
SUPPORT FROM ILO, THAT U.S. CONGRESS CONSEQUENTLY WILL HALT
FURTHER BUDGETARY SUPPORT FOR ORGANIZATION, AND THAT VIABILITY OF
ILO WOULD THEREFORE BE ENGAGED IN OUTCOME OF VOTE ON PLO OBSERVER
STATUS, AUSTRALIANS AND PERHAPS OTHERS WOULD RECONSIDER THEIR
POSITION. AT THIS POINT, OF COURSE, WE ARE NOT IN POSITION TO
ASSERT THAT THIS IS CASE, AND IN ABSENCE OF SUCH CLEARCUT STATE-
MENT, WE BELIEVE AUSTRALIANS WILL EVENTUALLY, THOUGH RELUCTANTLY,
GO ALONG WITH OBSERVER STATUS FOR PLO, PERHAPS EVEN VOTING FOR
IT IF THEY ASSESS VOTE AS LIKELY TO BE OVERWHELMINGLY IN FAVOR.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, RECOGNITION, MEETING OBSERVERS, INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CANBER00527
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750025-0290
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750127/aaaaaxy.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 12808, 75 GENEVA 342, 75 LONDON 1000
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ILO - REQUEST FOR POSTPONEMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PLO OBSERVER STATUS
TAGS: PFOR, AORG, ELAB, AS, US, ILO, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006